

DEVELOPING BRITISH FACTORY EMPLOYEES.

The exercises for certain classes in the gymnasium of the Y. M. C. A. building in Birmingham, England, are designed to offset the dwarfing effects of mill work. For those inclined to grow round shouldered over machines this "setting up" drill is used.



ROOM WHERE THE Y.

In this chamber on the upper floor of the dry goods store, Williams and a few other clerks organized the Y. M. C. A. around the table represent the twelve original members.

## Y. M. C. A.'S GREAT GROWTH

### Founder Lived to See a Remarkable Development.

"Teddy, are you willing to make a sacrifice for Christ?"

"I am."

Out of this question and answer, spoken by two young clerks sixty-one years ago on Blackfriars Bridge, London, has arisen an organization as great as the cities of Buffalo and San Francisco combined, and with ramifications that are world-wide. Its members may be met not only in the streets of New-York, but in the frozen north of Europe, in tropic Africa, in the islands of the Pacific. Indeed, wherever young men congregate for one cause or another, there you are likely to find a representative of this order. In the New-England college, the Pennsylvania coal mine, the Carolina cotton mill, the British warship, the Japanese fort, the "hostel," or boarding house of India, there are men still asking their fellows if they are "willing to make a sacrifice for Christ." And everywhere they get the answer, "I am."

Tremendous as is the growth of the Young Men's Christian Association, it has all been accomplished within the span of a single life. Its founder, Sir George Williams, died in London only the other day. It was he who first suggested such a society to his friend, Edward Beaumont, when crossing Blackfriars Bridge; and it was in a room in the drygoods establishment where he worked that he and eleven others, on June 6, 1844, held the first meeting of the society.

A few contrasts will show still more clearly how this handful of men has reached out to the ends of the earth. Instead of twelve members the association now has 700,000. Instead of limiting its efforts to a small district in a single city the Young Men's Christian Association is now represented by workers in the cities and villages of thirty-nine different countries throughout the world. And, unlike so many good things in this world, this association has prospered. The first twelve Young Men's Christian Association men spent 60 cents a week rent for a meeting room. At the present time the organization owns in various parts of the world about nine hundred buildings, worth \$37,000,000. Every three weeks, on an average, it puts up a new structure, so that in the course of twenty years more at this rate it will have room to house the whole of the present city of New-York.

Originally the Young Men's Christian Association appealed only to London clerks. In the 40's of the last century the condition of these men was deplorable. In those days, as W. H. Mills, secretary of the English National Council, once said, "Young men were herded together ten to fifteen in a room at night. They were literally driven from the shops to their beds and from their beds to the shops by a person called a shop walker. There was no sitting room, no social comfort, no library. They remained until they were taken ill, and then they were discharged at a moment's notice. Away they went, many of them to the workhouse, and numbers of them used to die prematurely."

The association changed all this. It proved to employers that by granting more leisure time to their men to be used in social enjoyments, clean sports or spiritual devotions they could get more and better work from them.

At the present time this organization is taking into its fold not London clerks alone, but the members of every class and caste, of every trade and profession, and of every race. Its members who are students would populate a city of 45,000 inhabitants. Its railroad men would form an army 72,000 strong. Its clerks and mechanics, soldiers and sailors would form a procession of 200,000 men, which, marching six abreast in close formation, would stretch over twenty-six miles. It has also among its

members 8,000 negro laborers in the Southern States.

Could all the Young Men's Christian Association men of the world settle in one city, those of each country living in a district by themselves, they would form the most cosmopolitan community under the sun. The Americans would form a colony of about 400,000, or more than half of the whole. There would be 127,000 British, 108,000 Germans, 8,650 Danes, 3,100 from China, 2,755 from Japan, 1,000 from Ceylon, 100 from Madagascar and 40 from Persia. Besides these there would be representatives of thirty other countries.

As may be seen by such comparisons the Young Men's Christian Association, although it was born in England, has nevertheless grown to its greatest strength in this country. Every four out of seven Young Men's Christian Association men live in the United States. Eight-ninths of the association's property is in this country. The headquarters of the international association are in this city, and here the society has achieved the greatest results. The property owned by the different New-York branches, with their 13,000 members, is equal in value to all the buildings and land owned by the 300,000 members in foreign lands. Its libraries possess 84,000 books, or more than one-third as many as in the Astor Library. New-York also possesses the most expensive and best equipped building in the whole association. It stands in West 23d-st. and cost \$860,000. It provides for practically every human need. There is a gymnasium as large as a baseball field for those who want exercise, bowling alleys and tennis courts for those desiring sport, a great roof garden for those in search of cool comfort in summer, a great swimming pool on the sixth floor for lovers of aquatic contests and cosy parlors where the weary may take it easy.

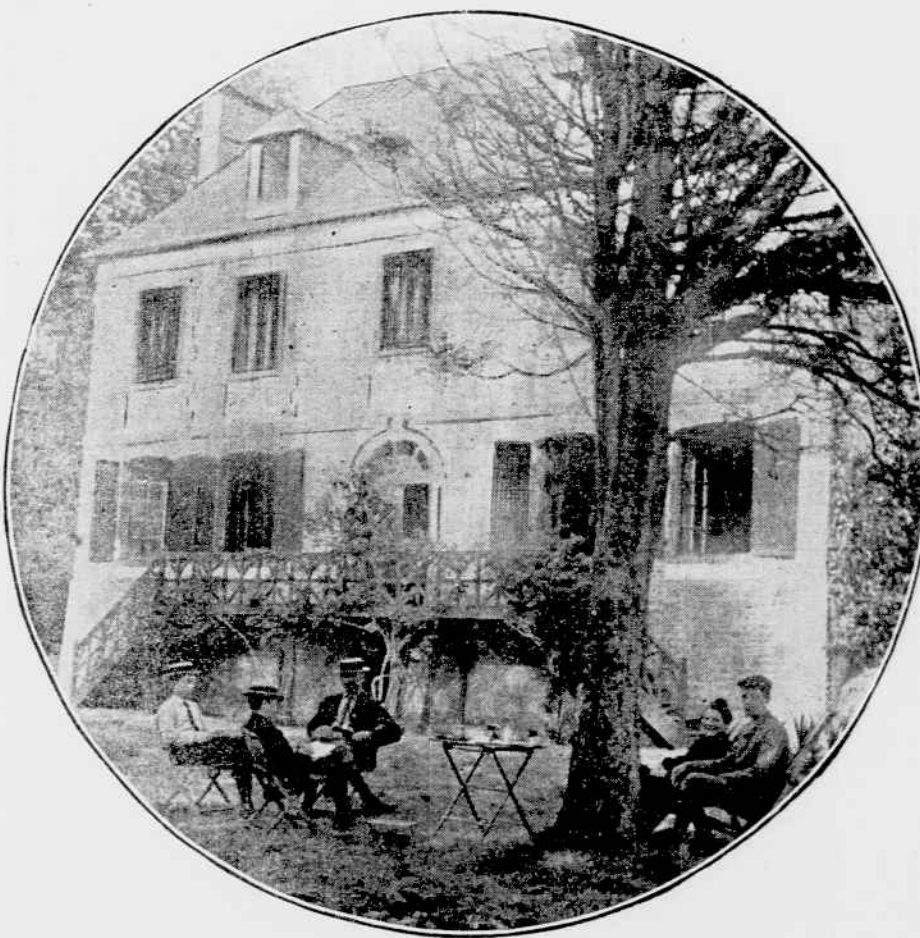
Clean sport is one of the tenets of the Young

Men's Christian Association. It is not enough that a member believes in the Bible and tries to live according to its precepts. A full appreciation of life, association leaders say, is impossible unless one possesses also a sound and vigorous body. And for this reason the Young Men's Christian Association gymnasium has been placed on almost as important a footing as the Bible class. Throughout the world it now has 556 gymnasiums, in which last year 135,000 men tightened their muscles and hardened their backbones. Its instructors in athletics are regarded as at the front of their profession. In the words of Dr. Anderson, of Yale, they constitute "the finest body of specialists in physical training in the world."

Wherever it goes this gospel of a "strong soul in a strong body" is preached. In the factory centre of Birmingham, England, the Young Men's Christian Association instructors give their classes certain exercises to offset the warping of their bodies by close application to machines. Boys who are compelled to stoop all day over looms meet in the association gymnasium at night and straighten their backs by a special kind of dumbbell drill.

In the faraway Philippines the natives, whose arms and chests have become dwarfed by long generations of idleness, are cared for with the same zeal as if their weakness was some malignant disease.

At Silang, in the midst of a Philippine jungle, an outdoor gymnasium has been built by a Young Men's Christian Association foreign secretary. Nearly all of the natives there are members of the constabulary. First he erected a bamboo house, with a shack roof, where the Filipinos might meet for social enjoyment, and near by he set up a series of parallel bars out of poles "cut from the bush." On these he persuaded the natives to work until he had built out many hollow chests and hardened not a few flabby



A SUMMER RESORT FOR FRENCH Y. M. C. A. MEN.

A rural retreat at Flainville, Department of the Seine, where Paris clerks spend vacations.



FOUNDER OF THE Y. M. C.

This is the costume George Williams wore when he organized the Y. M. C. A. on the semi-centennial of the organization.



WHERE YOUNG LONDONERS

A seaside holiday home on the Isle of Wight, where young Londoners spend their summer months.